22nd April 1948]

Firewood control.

* 59 *Q.*—SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Food be pleased to state—

(*a*) why the firewood control is still being kept up in Madras;

(*b*) whether the Government are aware that the control price of firewood in Madras is not much below the blackmarket price; and

(*c*) whether the Government will take steps immediately to remove the control?

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" (*a*) The Government have since issued orders for the decontrol and derationing of casuarina wood with effect from 1st May 1948 and of junglewood from 1st July 1948 in Madras City.

" (*b*) It is not quite clear as to what the Hon. Member means. It is, however presumed that he considers that the existing retail prices of firewood in Madras City are high and that he requires the reasons therefor. If so, the hon. Member is informed that these rates have been fixed by the Government in accordance with the policy of the Government, viz., to reduce the subsidy borne by the Government on account of firewood rationing in Madras City to the absolute minimum. It is, however, doubtful, if after decontrol, the price of firewood under conditions of free trade, would be more favourable from the point of view of the consumer.

" (*c*) In view of the answer for clause (*a*) above, this does not arise."

Thermal Station in Vizagapatam.

* 60 *Q.*—SRI P. VEERABHADRASWAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state what improvements the Government propose to make to the existing plant in the Vizagapatam Thermal Station to meet the growing demand for electrical energy for agricultural and industrial purposes?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The Government have sanctioned the Vizagapatam Power House Extension Scheme at an estimated cost of Rs. 22·91 lakhs initially rising to Rs. 27 lakhs within 5 years. This scheme provides for the addition of two 1,500 K.W. turbo alternator sets to the existing plant to meet the growing demand for electrical energy in the area for agricultural, industrial and other purposes. The two sets are expected to go into commission by the middle of 1949."

Preparation of voters' list in the Province.

* 61 *Q.*—SRI P. VEERABHADRASWAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) what arrangements the Government are making to prepare voters' lists of all adults in the Province; and